

4-1978

## Shufo no tomo Interview with Maureen Mansfield

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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
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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Mrs. Mansfield

DATE: April 26, 1978

FROM :   
Dan Howard, Press Office

SUBJECT: Shufu no tomo interview

Attached are a copy of the magazine and a translation of your interview which is on pages 172 - 176. As I said at the time I thought you gave an excellent interview and it turned out beautifully. There are several places where Mr. Isomura paraphrased your remarks and at one point he either paraphrased or misunderstood what I said but there was no misrepresentation, and it was a fine interview. Thank you very much for doing it. I hope that we can take advantage of similar opportunities from time to time in the future. Please let me know if you would like extra copies of the magazine.

In addition a card and some photos from Miss Masako Shiga, who accompanied Mr. Isomura, are attached. We have already thanked her for them.

Attachments



Shufu-no-Tomo, May, 1978, pp. 172-176

\*Hisanori Isomura Interviews the World's Top Ladies\* (5)

Interview with (Mrs.) Maureen Hayes Mansfield, the Wife of  
Super Big Name US Ambassador to Japan Mike Mansfield

"It was my idea to make my husband a statesman."

# #

Gracefully attired in a bright blue-pattern printed pink silk dress with a lovely frill around the neck, (Mrs.) Maureen H. Mansfield, 73, looks much younger than she is. She came to Japan last June, accompanying her husband Mr. Michael J. Mansfield, US Ambassador to Japan.

Mr. Mansfield is a man with an unusual career. He enlisted in the US Navy at the age of 14, served in the Marine Corps, worked as a miner and mining engineer, went to university, then became a professor of Latin American and Far Eastern History at Montana State University.

He entered the political arena in 1942 when he was elected to the House of Representatives. Since 1952 he had been a Senator from the State of Montana. He served in the US



Ambassador's Wife is Busier than Senator's

ISOMURA: My wife and I are grateful for your kind invitation to your residence last fall. After that, I spent about two weeks in the United States to produce some special programs. During that time, I had a chance to renew old friendships with many of my friends there and, to a man, they told me what a superb great ambassador America has sent to Japan. I also learned very well how many well-informed people in Washington respect your husband and adore you, Mrs. Mansfield.

MRS. MANSFIELD: (with an impish gaze) Your words sound like beautiful music in my ears. (Laughter) For the 36 years that we have worked for the public, I have worked very hard and I am proud of it.

ISOMURA: Could we start off with a very naive question? How do you like it here? Are you enjoying your life in Japan?

MRS. MANSFIELD: Yes, very much. Since my husband and I got here, every time someone asked me that question, I have replied with the same answer: "I have liked Japan since before I came here." (Laughter) I had visited Japan seven times earlier; but on each occasion, my stay was very short; so I had felt frustrated. But this time, it is different --



we can stay here longer, and I am enjoying every moment of it.

ISOMURA: Have you had any chance to get away from the Embassy and meet ordinary people?

MRS. MANSFIELD: Not as much as I hope to. One time we went to Kyushu for a planned stay of one week, but were called back three days later. But we did manage to visit Ishigakijima Island at Christmas time. I love seashells, so I collected some there. Isn't it wonderful collecting seashells on Ishigakijima at Christmas?

ISOMURA: By the way, we understand your husband is the first US Senator to become Ambassador to Japan. What difference is there between being the wife of a Senator and being the wife of an ambassador?

MRS. MANSFIELD: There is a great difference. As a Senator's wife, I had my own privacy almost all year round. During election campaigns every six years, I often had to go back to our constituency of Montana to meet and talk with local women, and occasionally, depending on the situation of the time, I had to make a speech before crowds of people for



political reasons; but as long as I was in Washington, my private life was completely secured.

ISOMURA: But even in Washington, you had to attend or have cocktail parties or dinner parties, didn't you?

MRS. MANSFIELD: Yes, that happened all the time, but it was not an obligation. But, as the wife of an ambassador, I am very busy here everyday, receiving a great number of guests, entertaining them, trying to meet as many people as I can.

ISOMURA: Mrs. Mansfield, you are honorary president of the Tokyo-Washington Women's Club (a social club for the wives of Americans in Tokyo and Japanese who have served in Washington), aren't you? My wife is a member, too, and she told me that she sang some songs at the recent meeting... To think that you even had to go through that. (Laughter)

MRS. MANSFIELD: That was two weeks ago. It was a very nice tea party. About eight members sang in a group, and they were very good.



Leaving Election Campaign to His Wife,  
He Enjoyed Coffee Time at His Office

ISOMURA: By the way, I hear that when Prime Minister Fukuda was stumping the country for the election, your husband told reporters that he left his campaigns entirely up to his wife and himself watched television over a cup of coffee at his office. Was that an exaggeration?

MRS. MANSFIELD: (Smiling) Well... He never got very absorbed in campaigning. He liked legislating -- law-making -- in Congress. He told his election campaigners only what he wanted them to do for him, but nothing more. He himself would not sound out what views the opposing candidates had. Therefore, I obtained such information and conveyed it to him. He always had his arguments against them, which were invariably better than theirs.

Since I myself was rather fond of campaigning, I did all of that.

ISOMURA: Did you also make a speech?

MRS. MANSFIELD: Yes. For instance, to men and women of all ages gathered in public halls in the small towns, I would



explain what my husband had done in Washington or what was going on in Congress. I told them how my husband was trying to push through Congress, say, a bill on a dam in which the people of Montana were especially interested, and how soon it was expected to be enacted. Or, sometimes in a small town, I talked with women about their children and other topics just to get acquainted with them. But the larger the town, the less accepted such techniques were. So, in large towns, my husband delivered formal speeches and had discussions.

ISOMURA: According to "Washington gossipers," you knew every single person in the constituency, the state of Montana which is about as large as Japan. Can that be so?

MRS. MANSFIELD: I suppose my husband could shake hands with each of them and call them by name. But, you know, there being 700,000 of them, I just had to give up.

ISOMURA: Yet your husband and you have had a firm grasp of "the grassroots," haven't you?

MRS. MANSFIELD: My husband calls local people by their nicknames and he valued human ties with them.



Husband and Wife Retired in Company

ISOMURA: What are the things that a politician's wife can do to help her husband?

MRS. MANSFIELD: As for social functions, there are such things as cocktail parties. And one may also have ties with small groups such as women's clubs in the constituency. In my case, it was only two years that I worked in my husband's office. My main job was to answer the many letters from the constituency. In addition, I talked with people about bills being introduced in Congress, and I visited Congress to listen to the debates. (Smiling) I am proud of having helped my husband that way.

ISOMURA: What qualities or attitude of mind do you think are required to be a politician's wife?

MRS. MANSFIELD: I don't think there is any definite type of politician's wife. There are some wives who display some influence in politics, but there are others who don't do that at all.

ISOMURA: It seems to me that Japanese politicians' wives are mostly of the latter type.

MRS. MANSFIELD: But I know there are some cases in which they are accompanied by their wives or daughters on their stumping tours. Don't you think that belofre long, in Japan too, women will develop further and more women will be elected to the Diet?

Even in the United States, for that matter, of the 100 members of the Senate, the only female member is Mrs. Humphrey. The rest are all males. This is too extreme.

ISOMURA: Nevertheless, there is a big difference between the United States and Japan in that in the United States not only politicians but all men take their wives with them to social functions such as parties, while in Japan the custom is for men only to gather among themselves.

MRS. MANSFIELD: It seems that way. In the embassy in Tokyo, there are many luncheons and dinners attended by men only. But in the United States, luncheons only for either males or females are exceptional. We have evening parties for women alone, but there are very few, if any, parties for men alone. I wonder whether you have parties only for women in Japan, too. (At this point, Press Officer Howard of the American Embassy, who was present, broke in:)



--- Mr. Isomura, I have heard it said that Mr. and Mrs. Mike Mansfield retired from the world of politics as a husband-and-wife team.

ISOMURA: I see. That's a very good expression. (Leaning forward) Then, let me ask about that. (Laughter)

Politicians Sacrifice Their Homes

MRS. MANSFIELD: By nature I was fond of politics. I was the one who persuaded my husband to enter politics.

ISOMURA: (Nods, showing great interest.)

MRS. MANSFIELD: We married when we both were but only students. My husband was a nameless student working part-time at a high school. We had no children for the first seven years of our marriage, and we wanted very much to have a child. When finally our daughter was born, we unexpectedly received congratulatory letters from many people. So, I said to Mike: "Isn't it wonderful that many people have so much interest in us? You should run for Congress or something." (Laughter) Surprisingly, he became interested in doing that.

The following year, he ran for the House of Representatives and was elected. So, it was my idea that prompted him to become a politician.

ISOMURA: I see. Do you regret now, 34 years later, that you urged him to become a politician?

MRS. MANSFIELD: No. But it is very hard work. Especially, it is tough every day for a politician's wife. You know, because my husband devotes himself entirely to his job and becomes absorbed in it. There is no time for him to pay attention to his family. Especially, politicians' children are made to feel miserable.

Mrs. Roosevelt once told me that if her son wanted to meet his father he had to make an appointment beforehand. And when they met at last and began to talk, the President's secretary would come in and hand him a memo. Thereupon, the President said to his son, "Now, go along home." So, a politician's wife and children are big victims. But, I don't regret anything.



Compromise Goes with Politics,  
Yet it is Easy to Stay Firmly Upright

ISOMURA: By the way, your husband is well known as a man of very stern integrity who held a liberal stand throughout his career as a politician. It is by no means easy for a politician to remain clean, I think. What is his secret?

MRS. MANSFIELD: No, I think it is very easy. Whether to take a liberal or conservative stand is a separate matter. Compromise is necessary in law-making. So, even if one takes a liberal position, one has to do a certain amount of compromising with other positions in order to get things done. But, there is nothing difficult about remaining a clean politician. One has only to be that way.

ISOMURA: But, in today's world it takes a lot of money to become a politician, doesn't it?

MRS. MANSFIELD: That is true, but there is a right way which is set by law. It is necessary to watch money closely during election campaigns. For instance, those who contributed money may want it redound to their advantage; but the person receiving the money must take great care to see whether or not it is improper. However much money may be

necessary, one should not accept it if it is illegal; and so he should not run for election using such money.

ISOMURA: Lastly, I felt when I visited America recently that US-Japan relations have become troubled over the unbalanced trade and other problems, even though the relationship as a whole is good. I think it is ideal that Mr. Mansfield, who was a veteran of Congress and who knows Japan well, is American Ambassador to Japan at such a time.

MRS. MANSFIELD: Anyone, if he becomes an Ambassador to Japan, will study hard about Japan and do his best; but the important thing is to cooperate with each other so that the situations in Japan and America and all the world will improve.

ISOMURA: Thank you very much.

# # #

Toward the end of the interview, the Ambassador showed up unexpectedly. He spoke casually with the editor and cameraman of "Shufu-no-Tomo" magazine, whom he did not know before, revealing the human aspect of his character different



from his usual dignified mien.

The room where the interview took place was the grand hall in the Ambassador's official residence, of which I have many fond memories.

When a small group of reporters including me were chatting with then Secretary of State Kissinger, there was a slight earthquake and we all jumped to our feet in surprise. In recent years, I have had the opportunity to associate with several successive American Ambassadors and their wives, and have acutely felt the atmosphere of the grand hall change subtly according to the personalities of the persons sitting there.

When Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield stand "there," the atmosphere in the familiar grand hall and dining room changes from a majestic one to a literally "at-home" air.

I knew by intuition that "this is it" -- that is, the greatest quality of a politician's wife is the ability to make her guests or constituents feel at home.

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